**(f) and (g) State-wise details of production of tea during the last three years are as follows :**

Production (Qty in mn. kgs.)

| Name of the states | 1998-99 | 1997-98 | 1996-97 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Assam | 449.02 | 438.76 | 419.25 |
| West Bengal | 191.20 | 177.10 | 160.00 |
| Tamil Nadu | 124.31 | 134.44 | 118.42 |
| Kerala | 69.58 | 72.37 | 63.42 |
| Other States | 16.14 | 15.35 | 14.22 |
| ALL INDIA | 850.25 | 838.02 | 775.31 |

(*Source* : Tea Board)

**Phasing out DEPB Scheme under WTO Agreement**

2451. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in view of the forthcoming WTO agreements, the DEPB scheme may have to be phased out; and

(b) what alternative plans Government have made to protect exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) with a view to achieving simplification of duty neutralization mechanisms and procedures, it has been decided to phase out the DEPB scheme with effect from 31-03-2002.

(b) From 1st April, 2002 onwards, exporters shall be reimbursed the indirect taxes and duties, paid on inputs, at the time of shipment itself, through one Duty Drawback Scheme.

**News items captioned "Seagrams cashes in policy confusion buys distillery"**

2452. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Seagrams cashes in policy confusion buys distillery" appearing in the Observer of Business and Polities. New Delhi. dated 25th December. 1999;

(b) whether it is a fact that M/s. Seagrams Mfg. Pvt. Limited bought out Oceanic Distilleries Pvt. Ltd without the approval of the Central Government and signed the MoU with OPDL in August, 1996; and

(c) If so, what action Government propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) to (c) The facts mentioned in the News Item have come to the notice of Government. It is for the concerned and relevant authorities to ascertain the facts for appropriate action.

**News-items captioned "India is 3rd on EU's trade priority"**

2453. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the Times of India. dated the 2nd March, 2000 captioned "India is 3rd on EU's trade priority".

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) Yes. Sir

(b) and (c) Mr. Pascal Lamy. Trade Commissioner of the European Commission visited India during 2-8. 2000. During his meeting with the Minister of Commerce & Industry on 7th March. 2000, the two sides exchanged views on bilateral and multilateral matters such as market access for Indian products in the EU market. anti-dumping/anti-subsidy measures instituted by EC and multilateral trade issues.

**Performance of Export Processing Zones**

2454. SHRI ANANTA SETHI : (a) whether Government have received the performance of the Export Processing Zone.

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years ;

(c) whether Government propose to open new EPZ during 2000-2001;

(d) if so, the places identified for the location of new EPZ ; and

(e) the details thereof ?